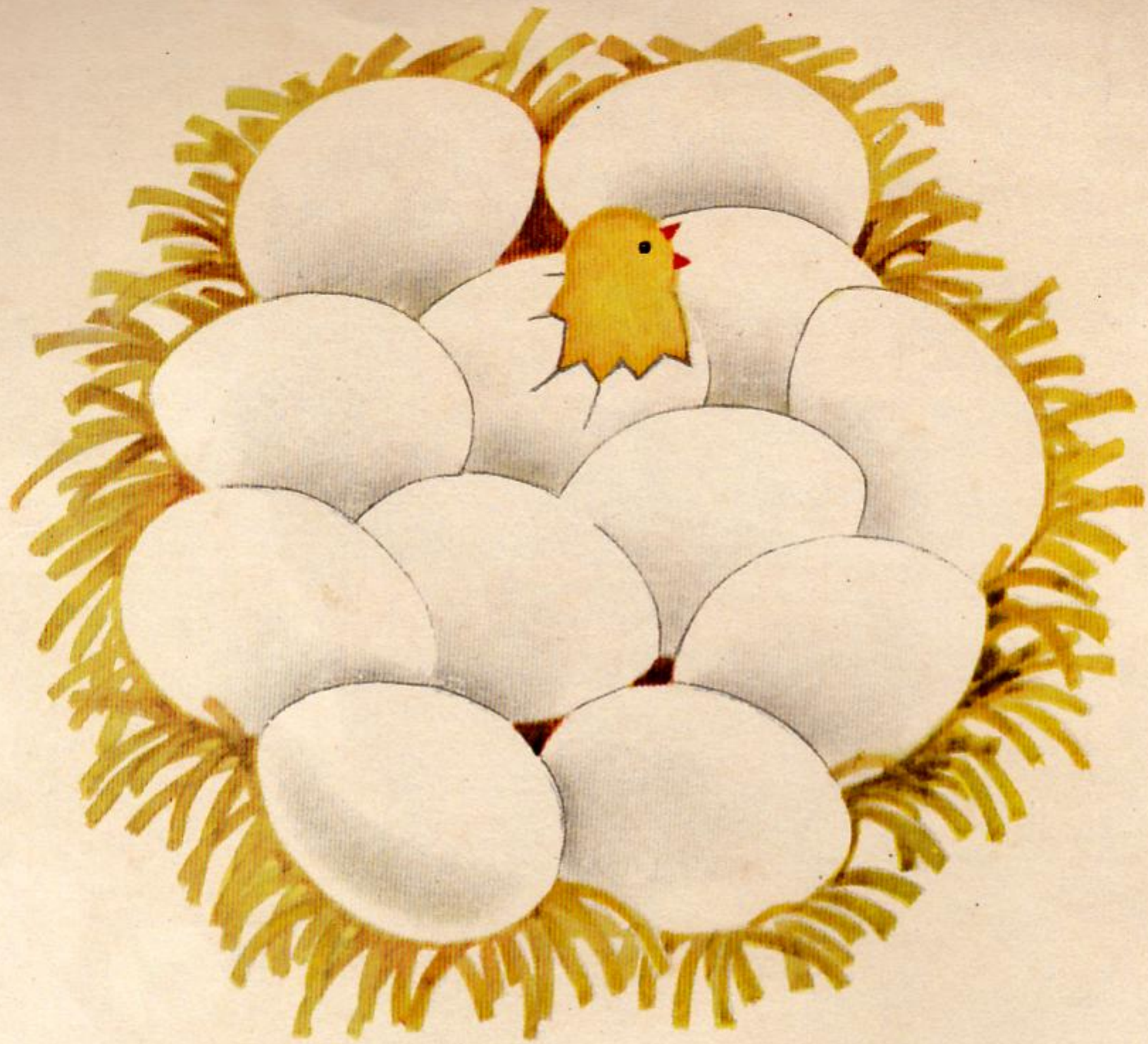
YURI AVERENKOV



WHOSE IS THE SUN?



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MOSCOW

"There! I'm out in the world at last!" squeaked the chick, popping his head out of the shell. "Oh! Why is it so light?"

He looked first to one side, then to another, and as he glanced up, the sun's bright rays made him squint.

"Oh, I see! It's because of you," he piped, addressing the sun. "You are nice and bright and yellow like me, only you are up there somewhere and I'm down here. That means you must have been hatched before I was. You wouldn't have had time to climb up so high otherwise."

But the sun made no reply and only beamed at him.

The chick scrabbled out of the shell, and, hopping and skipping on his spindly legs, ran over the warm grass.





Suddenly he saw a little brown house with a round hole in the middle. From within came someone's heavy breathing.

The chick knocked at the side of the house with his bill.

"Hey! Anyone in?" he called.

There was no reply.

"Come on, answer me!" he called again.

A grumble of annoyance came from inside the house, and a pup's shaggy head emerged from the hole.

"Who are you?" the chick asked.

The pup looked at him sleepily.

"I'm the owner of this kennel. The kennel is mine," he explained.

The chick blinked.

"You are the ... er ... owner ... of this ... er ... kennel?"

"That's right," yawned the pup.

The chick looked him over slowly.

"Let's play," he offered.

"Have you got anything to play with?"

"No-o..."

"No? Well, in that case, what's the fun of it!"





"We'll have lots of fun, never fear. Look what I can do!"

And the chick hopped up and down several times.

But the pup yawned again and disappeared inside the kennel.

The chick thought hard.

"I forgot about my shell!" he cried. "Come on out and look at my shell!"

The puppy gave a snort of disdain and climbed out of the kennel.

"Couldn't you think of anything better to show me?" he asked. "Why, I can break up that old shell of yours just like that! There – see that? There's nothing left of it at all." And he stamped on the shell and crushed it.





The chick felt hurt.

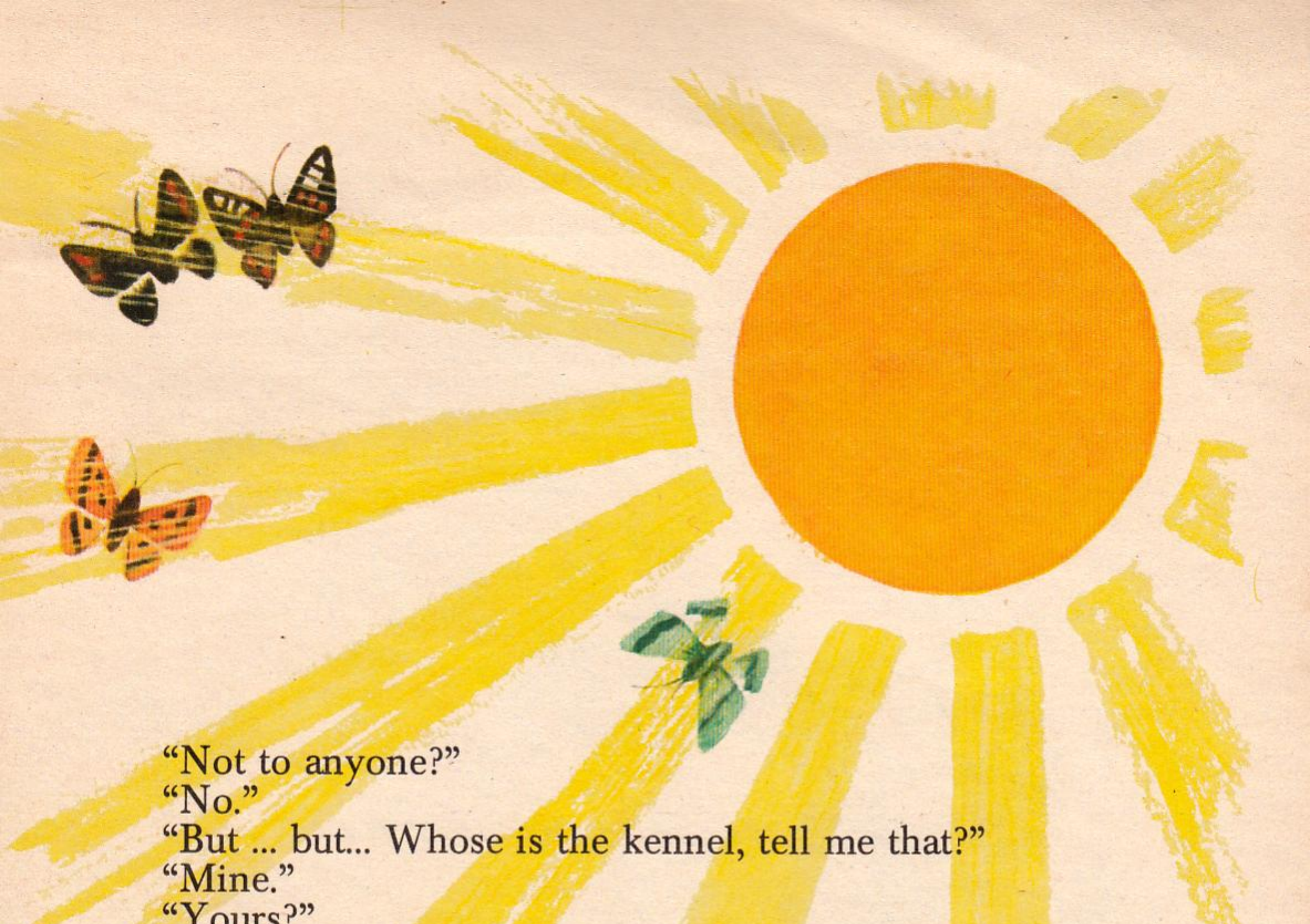
"I have lots of things besides the shell," he said. "I have ... I have...." There were so many treasures around him: the green grass, the bright-hued butterflies, the warm and sparkling puddles in which played tiny, winking beams of sunlight.

"I have ... that!" he brought out, pointing at the sun.

The pup laughed.

"What? The sun? Nonsense! The sun doesn't belong to anyone."





"Not to anyone?"
"No."
"But ... but... Whose is the kennel, tell me that?"
"Mine."
"Yours?"
"Yes."
"And whose is the sun?"
"Nobody's."
"Nobody's? Well, if that's so, I'll take it for myself." And the chick strode straight across a puddle.
"Wait!" the puppy brought out, alarmed. "How do you mean you'll take it for yourself?"
The chick stopped.
"You have a kennel, haven't you?"
"Ye-es."
"It's yours, isn't it?"
"It is."
"Well, the sun will be mine."
"Now, just a minute. What if I give you half my kennel – you won't take the sun for yourself then, will you?"
"Half your kennel? What for? What will I do with it?"



"You mean you don't know?" the pup asked in surprise. "It will be yours. You will live in your half and I will live in mine."

"All right," agreed the chick.

Twirling his tail joyfully, the pup dived into the kennel and drew out a brand-new handsaw. The saw buzzed and sang and strewed the ground with sawdust, and the kennel stirred like a living thing, jerked suddenly and broke up into two neat halves. Between them sat the pup, and, pleased with his handiwork, smiled. He was all powdered with sawdust, and a little heap of it clung to his tongue.



The chick ran up to him and blew at it, and at once they both felt a tickling in their noses and sneezed loudly.

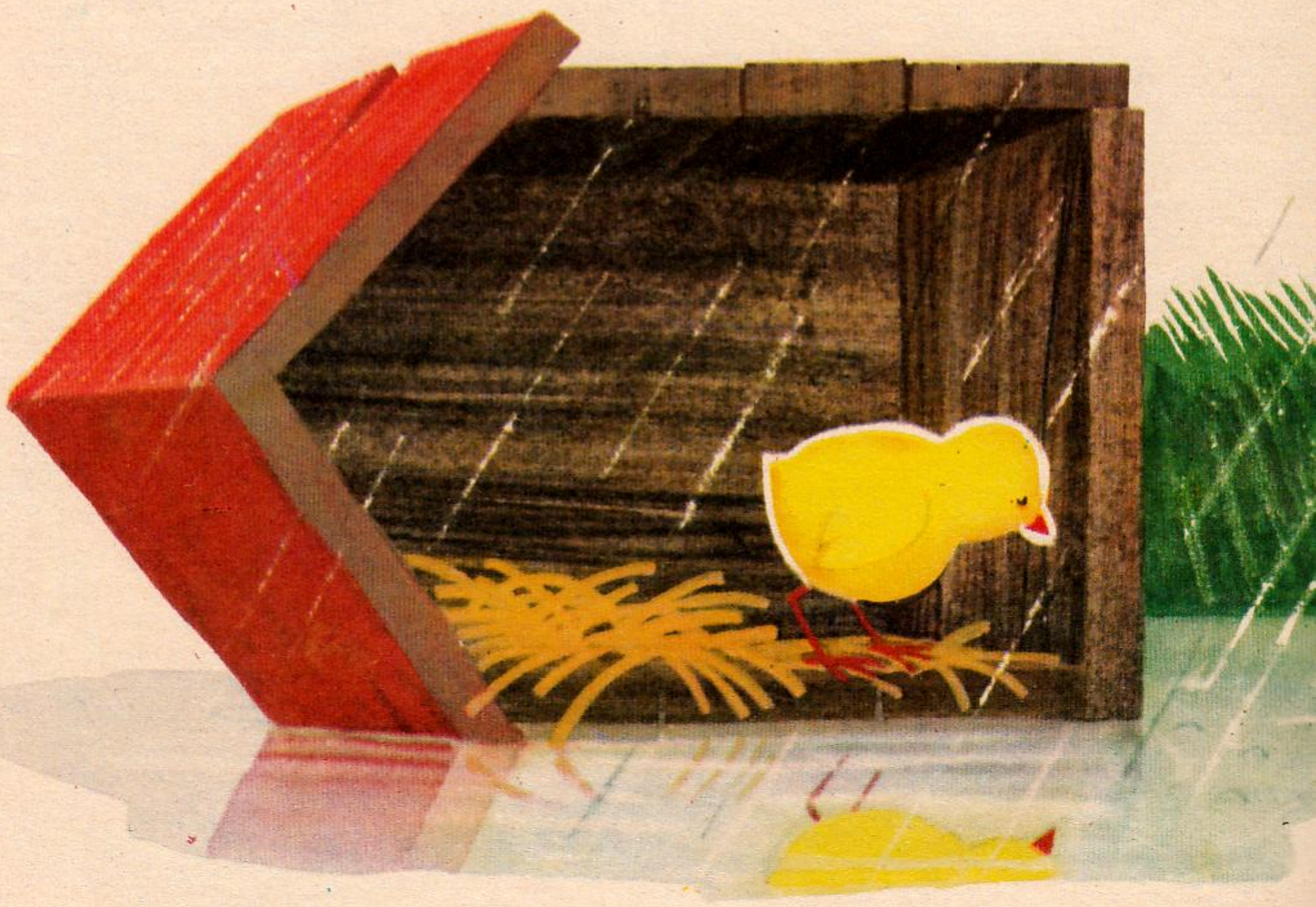
"There! It's all done," said the pup. "Now each of us has a house of his own. Let's go inside."

They did so, and the pup laid his head on his front paws.

"That was a grand idea, wasn't it?" he asked.

"I guess so," the chick said, shivering and trying to hide in a corner, for it had turned suddenly cold and do what he would he could not get warm.

The sun hid behind a cloud, and everything around became bleak and ugly. A cold wind blew and drops of rain spattered the ground.





"Hey, chick!" called the pup.

"What is it?" the chick squeaked in a tiny voice.

"Let's you and me pay each other a visit."

"I don't mind. But who will come to see who first?"

"You come to see me."

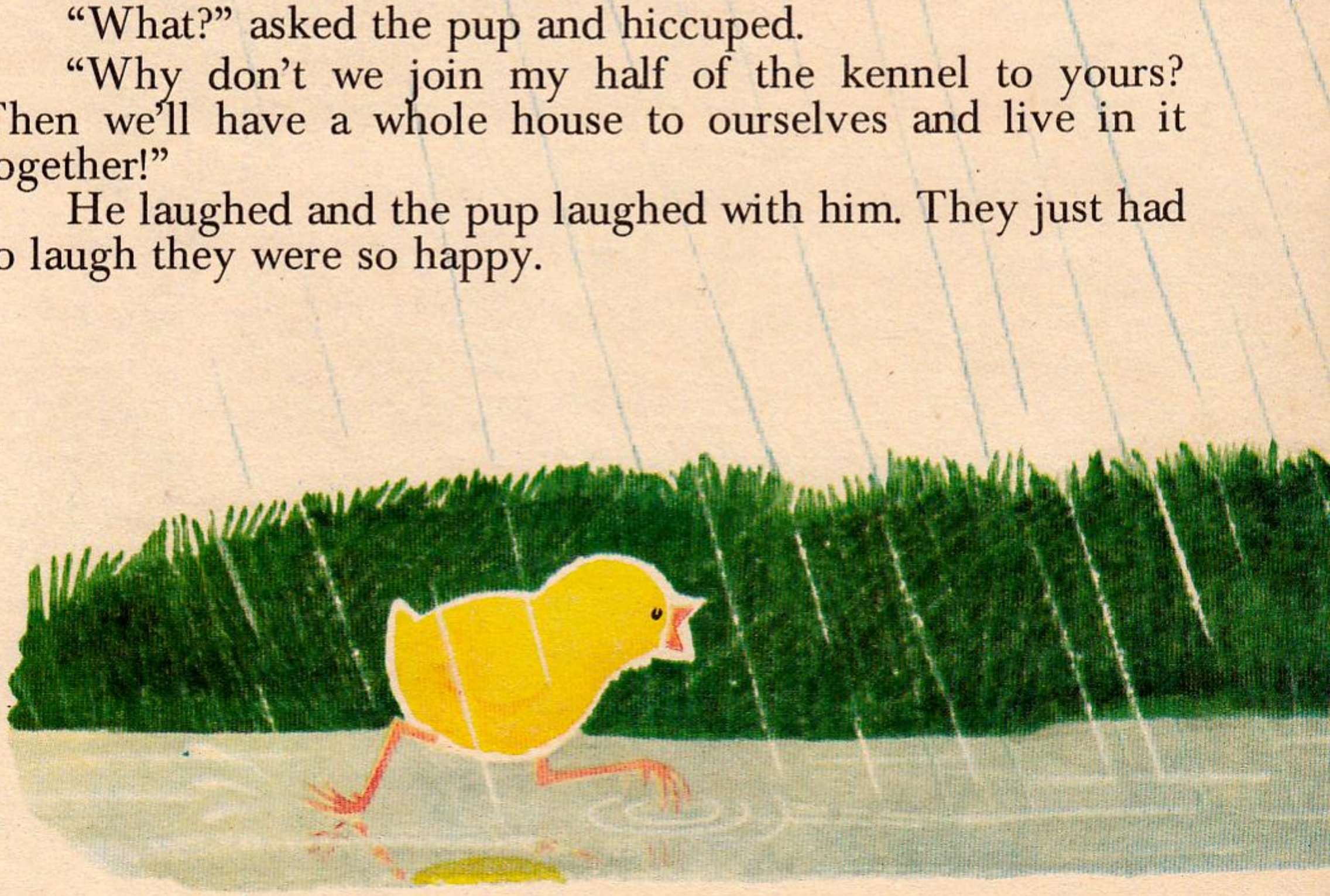
"All right!" And the chick hopped out into the rain and ran to join the pup. But it turned out to be just as cold and cheerless in the pup's house as in his own. The two of them squeezed up against each other and stared out silently at the dark puddles. The pup began hiccuping loudly with the cold.

"You know what?" said the chick.

"What?" asked the pup and hiccuped.

"Why don't we join my half of the kennel to yours? Then we'll have a whole house to ourselves and live in it together!"

He laughed and the pup laughed with him. They just had to laugh they were so happy.





Just then the sun appeared. It came out from behind the cloud and shook off the rain-drops and it met two pairs of shining eyes staring up at it from the little brown house below. The sun sailed low over the house, nodded its head at the two friends and vanished beyond the forest.

"Oh, look! It's gone away again," said the chick sadly, gazing after it.

"Yes, but not for ever," the pup explained in cheery tones. "It will come to see us every day. It belongs to both of us now, to you and to me."







Ю. Аверенков

У ТЕБЯ ЕСТЬ СОЛНЦЕ?

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